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MUSKWA KECHIKA

Advisory Board Annual Report 1998-99





MUSKWA-KECHIKA ADVISORY BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 1998-1999

October 1999

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board created by the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act in June of 1998 has the responsibility to review the issuance of tenures and approval of operational activities to examine the achievement of management plan objectives through local strategic planning and operational activities. The Advisory Board also reviews the Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund applications and recommends funding expenditures, according to criteria consistent with the Advisory Board's Strategic Plan. The Advisory Board has the responsibility to report annually on the above-mentioned activities.

This report concludes, that all tenures and permits issued, renewed and replaced and all operational activities conducted by government agencies in the MKMA during the 1998-1999 Fiscal Year were deemed to be consistent with the MKMA Act and the Fort Nelson and Fort St. John Land and Resource Management Plans.

The expenditures from the Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund, consistent with the business plan and authorized by the trustee, are reported. The highlights of these expenditures are:

- a) A grant of \$900,000 to the University of Northern British Columbia to build capacity for a long-term partnership with the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area by establishing a Muskwa-Kechika professorship and a Muskwa-Kechika component of the Northern Land Use Institute's Endowment Fund.
- b) The on-going clean up of old fuel barrels that are an environmental hazard.
- c) Planning support and the consolidation of inventory information from the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area.

INTRODUCTION

The Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act establishes an Advisory Board and brings into regulation the Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan.

The plan states that "The Advisory Board will be responsible for:

- (a) Conducting semi-annual reviews of the issuance of tenures and approval of operational activities to examine the achievement of management plan objectives through local strategic planning and operational activities;
- (b) reporting, at least annually, to the public and the Premier on the results of the Board's semi-annual reviews and any other issues related to the management of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area;"

The passage of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act in June 1998 created the Advisory Board and its oversight function. The Advisory Board held its first meeting in October of 1998. The review for the 1998-1999 year reflects the start up activity of the Advisory Board and relies on the report of the Inter-Agency Management Committee (IAMC.)

BACKGROUND

In 1997, the Government of British Columbia accepted the multi-stakeholder Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) table recommendations for the Fort St. John and Fort Nelson Forest Districts. These recommendations included special management of the Muskwa-Kechika area.

A Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan was adopted through Order-in-Council (1367/97) in December of 1997. The management plan provided direction to all government agencies for implementation of the LRMP objectives and strategies for agency-specific management activities, local strategic plans, resource development permits and Crown land and natural resource dispositions.

In June 1998, the legislature passed the *Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act*. The act identifies the purpose of the *Muskwa-Kechika Management Area*:

"WHEREAS the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area is an area of unique wilderness in Northeastern British Columbia that is endowed with a globally significant abundance and diversity of wildlife;

AND WHEREAS the management intent for the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area is to maintain in perpetuity the wilderness quality, and the diversity and abundance of wildlife and the ecosystems on which it

depends while allowing resource development and use in parts of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area designated for those purposes including recreation, hunting, timber harvesting, mineral exploration and mining, oil and gas exploration and development;

AND WHEREAS the long-term maintenance of wilderness characteristics, wildlife and its habitat is critical to the social and cultural well-being of first nations and other people in the area;

AND WHEREAS the integration of management activities especially related to the planning, development and management of road accesses within the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area is central to achieving this intent and the long-term objective is to return lands to their natural state as development activities are completed.

The *Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act* also made the pre-existing *Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan* a regulation. Additionally the legislation created an Advisory Board for the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area and a Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund.

The Advisory Board is to ensure that activities within the area are consistent with the objectives of the *Muskwa-Kechika Management Area Act* and the *Muskwa-Kechika Management Plan*. The management plan directs the Advisory Board to review the issuance of tenures as well as operational activities.

The Advisory Board is charged with reporting, at least annually, to the public and the Premier on the results of the Board's semi-annual reviews and any other issues related to the management of the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area;

The Omineca-Peace Interagency Management Committee is to work in partnership with the Advisory Board to prepare an annual monitoring report on plan implementation, amendments and expenditures.

This document reports on the activities and progress of the Advisory Board in its inaugural year, summarizes the information provided by the IAMC in *The Annual Report of the Omineca-Peace Interagency Management Committee to the Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board (Fiscal Year 1998-1999) June 30, 1999* and identifies matters of significance or concern.

GOVERNMENT AGENCY OPERATIONS SUMMARY

Tenures or Permits

In summary, 25 new tenures or permits were issued in the MKMA during the 1998-1999 Fiscal Year. 127 tenures or permits were renewed and 8 tenures or permits were replaced. Summary totals for each agency are listed below:

New Tenures/Permits

Ministry of Forests

Grazing permits	2
Cash timber sales	2
Free use permits	2

BC Environment

AMA Permits	1
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BC Parks

Non-exclusive commercial use permits	1
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Mineral Titles Branch

Mineral claims	4
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Mines Branch

Notices of Work	2
-----------------	---

Petroleum Lands Branch

Drilling lease	1
Oil/gas lease	1

Oil and Gas Commission

Pipeline permit	1
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BC Assets and Land Corporation

License of occupation	5
Temporary permit	1
Highway Relocation	1

Renewed Tenures/Permits

BC Environment

Guide licenses	26
Trapping	51
Angling guide licenses	12

BC Assets and Land Corporation

License of occupation	37
Temporary permit	1

Replaced Tenures/Permits

BC Assets and Land Corporation

License of occupation	7
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There are number of applications, primarily for Commercial Recreation (CR) permits, on hold because of the need to complete the MKMA Recreation Management Plan. This includes a number of existing tenured operators that want to expand their operations into CR activities other than hunting.

Operational Activities

Operational activities conducted by agencies included:

- Recreation trail bridge installation;
- Fish, fish habitat and caribou inventories;

- Stream crossing assessments;
 - Enforcement patrols;
 - Reconnaissance/information gathering in Protected Areas;
 - Collection/mapping of GPS data;
 - Photo inventory of information and interpretation signs;
 - Interpretation Programs;
 - Production of information brochures;
 - Horse range burn assessments;
 - Production of information displays in Protected Areas;
 - Land Act tenure inspections/assessments;
 - Maintenance activities on the Alaska Highway;
- Local strategic planning; and Compliance and enforcement inspections of oil/gas operations.

Evaluation

The Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board has reviewed the IAMC report and has general concurrence with its conclusion:

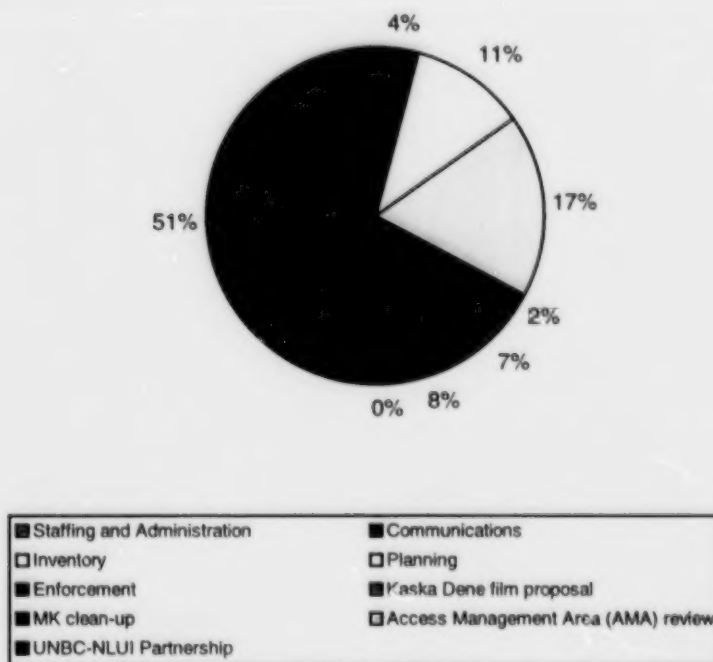
" All tenures and permits issued, renewed and replaced and all operational activities conducted by government agencies in the MKMA during the 1998-1999 Fiscal Year were evaluated and deemed to be consistent with the MKMA Act and the Fort Nelson and Fort St. John Land and Resource Management Plans."

The Board has initiated a policy review of Advisory Board procedures for liaison with agencies.

MUSKWA-KECHIKA TRUST FUND EXPENDITURE SUMMARY

Expenditures

Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund Expenditures 1998-1999
Total \$1,921,121



The Advisory Board is to report annually on the expenditures from the Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund. The chart below and the detailed table found in Appendix 1 report the expenditures from the Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund for Fiscal year 1998-99 consistent with the business plan approved by the Trustee after consultation with the Advisory Board.

The highlights of these expenditures are:

1. A grant to the University of Northern British Columbia to build capacity for a long term partnership with the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area, by establishing a Muskwa-Kechika professorship and a Muskwa-Kechika component of the Northern Land Use Institute's Endowment Fund.
2. The on-going clean up of old fuel barrels that are an environmental hazard.
3. Planning support and the consolidation of inventory information from the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area.

MUSKWA-KECHIKA TRUST FUND DETAILED RECOMMENDED BUSINESS PLAN AND EXPENDITURES (1998-1999)

Resp: 666 Account: 08147

Staffing and Administration

Item	Description	Project Manager	Allocation	Expenditures at Mar 31/99	Variance	Comments
Sub-contractors/administrative support for coordination	Contract support to the Board, Land Use Coordination Office and the MK staff in administration, communication, and operational contracts.	Warren Mitchell	50,000	49,881	119	Chillborne Holdings; no further amendments
Sub-contractors/administrative support for coordination	Additional contract support as required to the Board, Land Use Coordination Office and the MK staff in administration, communication, and operational contracts	Warren Mitchell	50,000	3,546	46,454	Dovetail Consulting ++
BC Building Corporation	Rental of office space for staff to end of fiscal	Warren Mitchell	20,000	4,829	15,171	Space only from Dec 1/98; rate still being negotiated.
MK Director Salary	Salary and moving expenses for new Director position (approx. 3 months)	Warren Mitchell	30,000	25,309	4,691	
Board initiation and computers	Initial meetings, board operations and expenses, and purchase of 3 computers for staff, office space and administration	Warren Mitchell	45,000	45,000	0	expenses incurred to Sept 30/98
Additional support for board	Board expenses and administrative support for meetings and committee work	Warren Mitchell	40,000	26,101	13,899	ongoing board and admin expenses
TOTALS			235,000	154,666	80,334	

Communications

Project No.	Item	Description	Project Manager	Allocation	Expenditures at Mar 31/99	Variance	Comments
96606	Symposium concept development	Contract to develop an overview of the concept for a land use symposium for 1999/2000 fiscal year	Warren Mitchell	10,000	10,000	0	
96606	Symposium design and planning	Contract to undertake initial organization and coordination of land use symposium to be held in the 1999/2000 fiscal year	Warren Mitchell	15,000	14,925	75	
96607	Extensions and communication s	Contract position to develop communications plan and initial communication products including an MK brochure. To communicate world class nature of MK, balance of conservation and resource development, and innovative management approach.	Warren Mitchell	70,000	30,673	39,327	reprints of maps; Banner Camp; Trailhead sign plan.
96610	Logo project	Design of a new MK logo to be used for communication products	Don Roberts	25,000	18,678	6,322	
	Signage	MK monument erection at Steamboat Mountain	Mary Visztai-Beale	5,000	0	5,000	not happening
	TOTALS			125,000	74,276	50,724	

Inventory

Project No.	Item	Description	Project Manager	Allocation	Expenditures at Mar 31/99	Variance	Comments
96613	Baseline inventory data assembly	Compilation of existing MK inventory data into a common platform and dedicated data set	Jules Paquette	50,000	27,683	22,317	possible \$20K contract will not be completed this fiscal year
96614	Wildlife surveys	Continuation of wildlife monitoring: collared caribou and sheep program	John Elliott	120,000	119,049	951	
96603	Research review	Literature review of relevant research applicable to the MK	Ron Rutledge	50,000	47,209	2,791	
	TOTALS			220,000	193,941	26,059	

Planning

Project No.	Item	Description	Project Manager	Allocation	Expenditures at Mar 31/99	Variance	Comments
96600	Initiate Besa-Prophet pre-tenure	Oil and gas pre-tenure planning required in the MK prior to initiating tenures	Colin Magee	145,000	145,000	0	
96600	Completion of Besa-Prophet pre-tenure	Completion of the project initiated earlier in fiscal year and is a requisite for any oil and gas development. Includes \$62,000 for plan writing and public consultation	Colin Magee	142,000	85,183	56,817	
96601	Initiate MK recreation plan	Contract to compile overview of current recreation activities in the MK	Ron Rutledge	10,000	6,001	3,999	
96601	Recreation plan	Completion of recreation overview plan	Ron Rutledge	25,000	0	25,000	delayed because of staff changes
96601	Wildlife plan	Initial preparation of wildlife overview plan	John Elliott	27,000	27,000	0	
96609	Parks master planning	Assisting BC Parks with preparing master plans for all of the MK protected areas	Don Roberts	60,000	44,568	15,432	includes tech salary
	Landscape unit planning	Initiate landscape unit planning for 2-3 key MK landscape units	Mary Viszlai-Beale	20,000	0	20,000	in-house resources utilized
	TOTALS			429,000	307,752	121,248	

Enforcement

Project No.	Item	Description	Project Manager	Allocation	Expenditures at Mar 31/99	Variance	Comments
96608	Enforcement and signage	Enforcement signs for AMA boundary, ATV designated routes, and garbage reduction	Don Roberts	30,000	29,286	714	
96604	Enforcement (travel for CO's)	Assistance to the CO service for enforcement flying in the MK area.	Ben Mitchell-Banks	40,000	8,003	31,997	less trips than anticipated due to late start.
	TOTALS			70,000	37,289	32,711	

Other

Project No.	Item	Description	Project Manager	Allocation	Expenditures at Mar 31/99	Variance	Comments
96612	Kaska Dene film proposal	Partnership for providing half the costs for a one hour documentary film depicting lifestyles and changes with the MacDonald family who have lived in the MK area for hundreds of years	Walter Carlick c/o Warren Mitchell	115,000	115,000	0	
	Trail development proposal	Partnership with Kaska Dene on planning of trail	Walter Carlick c/o Warren Mitchell	7,500	0	7,500	
96602	MK clean-up	Project to clean up fuel barrels, domestic garbage and industrial garbage	Dave Lawson	200,000	135,426	64,574	
96605	Access Management Area (AMA) review	Public review of AMA and MK boundaries	Andy Ackerman	10,000	2,771	7,229	
96615	UNBC-NLUI Partnership		Warren Mitchell	500,000	900,000	(400,000)	
	TOTALS			832,500	1,153,197	(320,697)	

Expenditures by category Muskwa-Kechika Trust Fund 1998-1999

Category	Allocation	Expenditure	Variance
Staffing/ administration	\$ 235,000.00	\$ 154,666.00	\$ 80,334.00
Communications	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 74,276.00	\$ 50,724.00
Inventory	\$ 220,000.00	\$ 193,941.00	\$ 26,059.00
Planning	\$ 429,000.00	\$ 307,752.00	\$ 121,248.00
Enforcement	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 37,289.00	\$ 32,711.00
Other	\$ 832,500.00	\$ 1,153,197.00	\$ (320,697.00)
Grand Total	\$ 1,911,500.00	\$ 1,921,121.00	\$ (9,621.00)

Appendix 2 - Detailed Report Agency Activity

Ministry of Forests, Fort St. John Forest District

Timber Harvesting

There was only minor harvesting activity within the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area during 1998/99. Neither Canadian Forest Products Ltd. (Canfor) nor the small business program are carrying out operations in the area. Unless grandfathered, harvesting can only proceed in the Muskwa-Kechika under an approved landscape unit plan.

Small quantities of wood have been harvested for operations associated with guide and outfitting activities. These were limited to one timber sale license and two free use permits.

Range

There are five grazing licenses within the Muskwa-Kechika that have been issued to support holders of guide outfitting licenses. In addition, there are two grazing licenses for ranchers who have a small piece of their operations within the Muskwa-Kechika.

Recreation

The Northland Trailblazers Snowmobile Club and Canfor carried out Work on the Redfern Lake Recreation Trail. Forest Renewal BC supplied \$18,000 to build five temporary snowmobile shelters, one was outside the Muskwa-Kechika and four were within the Besa-Halfway-Chowade RMZ. In addition to the shelters, the monies were used to produce and install trail signs and for trail clearing and brush slashing to improve trail safety.

The Besa Bridge, for ATV, snowmobile, horse and foot traffic was installed on the Redfern Trail. The bridge was constructed and preparatory work completed in the previous year.

Compliance and Enforcement

An investigation was carried out for a contravention under Section 96(1) of *the Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act* for cutting and damaging Crown timber without authority. The District Manager subsequently issued a Notice of Violation, which described the results of the investigation, and an Opportunity to be Heard letter to allow the suspect an opportunity to review the evidence and provide information on his behalf.

The timber was ultimately seized by the MOF and disposed of through the Small Business Forest Enterprise Program.

Ministry of Forests, Fort Nelson Forest District**Timber Harvesting**

There was no timber harvesting activity within the Muskwa-Kechika during 1998/99. None of the licensee forest development plans show any proposed operations in the management area. There are four (4) small administrative areas along the highway corridor which were established in the late 1980's and early 1990's for Cash Timber Sale Licenses. These areas have been grandfathered and will be available for use once the Silviculture Prescriptions have been completed and approved. Small quantities of wood have been harvesting from these areas in the past for use as building logs. In addition, small quantities of wood have been harvested from various locations for operations associated with guide and outfitting activities.

Range

There are sixteen grazing licenses and five grazing permits within the M-k that have been issued to support holders of guide outfitting licenses and ranchers.

Recreation

There were no new sites, facilities or trails developed in 1998/99.

An effort was made to clean up old existing unauthorized structures and campsites along the major river corridors. The information requesting users to dismantle structures and clean-up sites was spread through pamphlets, information signs, and public meetings. Newspaper ads and formal letters. The district manager, under the authority of Sections 99 and 102 of the *Forest Practices Code Act of British Columbia* ensured the removal of all unauthorized cabins or campsites. To date only three cases have required an official determination by the district manager and one is still outstanding.

BC Environment

Inventory

A Resources Inventory Committee (RIC) standard Overview Fish and Fish Habitat Inventory in the Middle Muskwa Watershed Group was conducted. The area covered by the inventory included the Muskwa River and its tributaries from the Tuchodi River in the south to the Tetsa River in the north or roughly 4250 square km. Forest Renewal BC funded the project.

A caribou inventory was conducted between the Graham and Prophet Rivers.

Watershed Restoration

A number of crossing were assessed to scope out barriers to fish passage. The worst barrier found (in terms of km. of stream blocked to fish) was a twin culvert crossing on Nonda Creek. It blocks 140km of stream to arctic grayling and mountain whitefish (probably bull trout, too.)

Access Management Area Permits

AMA permits were issued to the following government agencies:

- BC Assessment Authority;
- Oil and Gas Commission;
- BCAL;
- BC Parks;
- Ministry of Energy and Mines; and
- Ministry of Forests, Fort St. John and Fort Nelson.

Enforcement

Conservation officers conducted the following activities within the MKMA:

- 3 ATV patrols;
- 2 helicopter flights;
- 1 fixed wing flight;
- 2 riverboat patrols; and
- 6 vehicle patrols.

BC Parks

Operational activities carried out by BC Parks during Fiscal Year 1998-1999 are listed in figure 1.

Figure 1. Operational Activities by BC Parks:

ACTIVITY	PARK/PROTECTED AREA
Horse Trip - Reconnaissance/ Information Gathering	Redfern-Kelly
ATV Trip - Reconnaissance/ Information Gathering	Redfern-Kelly
Fly-in and Hiking - Reconnaissance/ Information Gathering	Northern Rocky Mountains (Kluachesi Lake Area)
ATV Trip - Reconnaissance/ Information Gathering	Graham-Laurier (Christina Falls Area)
Collection and Mapping of GPS data	Stone Mountain Wokkpash Muncho Lake
Interpretation Programming	Liard River Hotsprings
Photo-Inventory of Interpretation and Information Signs	Tetsa River Stone Mountain Muncho Lake Liard River Hotsprings
Information Brochures	Stone Mountain
Assessment of Horse Range Burns	Northern Rocky Mountains
Salt-Lick Program - placement of Alaska Hwy to help minimize vehicle-wildlife collisions	Stone Mountain Muncho Lake
Information Displays for planning processes	Northern Rocky Mountains Redfern-Kelly
School Programming on BC Parks values and awareness of new areas within the MK	Fort St. John Fort Nelson
Horse Trip - Reconnaissance/ Information Gathering	Northern Rocky Mountains (Tetsa River & Chischa River Areas)
Reconnaissance/ Information Gathering	Wokkpash
Enforcement/Presence/PR	Stone Mountain (Flower Springs, Mt St George Area)
Enforcement/Reconnaissance/Presence/PR	AMA Routes/Muncho Lake
Boat Trip - Enforcement	Muncho Lake
Reconnaissance with MOF	Scatter River Old Growth Liard River Corridor Toad River Hotsprings
Boat Trip - Reconnaissance/ Information Gathering, in conjunction with MOF addressing trespass structures	Northern Rocky Mountains (Tuchodi River Area)
Enforcement Flight with C.O. Service	Denetiah Dall Lakes
Routine Enforcement Patrols	Muncho Lake Stone Mountain Tetsa River Liard Hotsprings

BC Assets and Land Corporation

In the 1998-1999 Fiscal Year, BCAL staff undertook the following operational activities in the MKMA:

- August 1998 - trip to Redfern Lake to assist BC Parks with new Protected Area and associated issues within the MKMA.
- Sept 1998 - inspection of Turnagain Guide Outfitter camps and associated sites including stops at Gary Moore's, Darwin Cary's, Ross Peck's base camps.
- November 1998 - trip into former Lynn Ross Guide Territory to determine remaining improvements, and potential cleanup remaining.

In addition, a number of meetings with BCAL clients with operations in the MKMA occurred. These meetings were concerned, mainly, with existing tenures or new applications, which have been processed to the level consistent with the direction given in the MKMA Management Plan.

Existing tenures that expired within the MK were renewed to allow continued tenure. These renewals extended the exact terms and conditions of the contracts that were previously in place. Exceptions were Michael Papp, who's application has been in a number of names over the past ten years with no long term tenures actually having been granted. A tenure for Guide Outfitting only was issued during this time period prior to the declaration of the Liard River Corridor Protected Area. This will allow a logical transfer of the tenure over time, if required, to be transferred to BC Parks. The sites associated with this tenure exist within and outside of the new protected area.

John Robidou, a Guide Outfitter, was given approval to complete the construction of a base camp in the Alaska Highway Corridor. This permit proceeded after the approval of all line agencies. His existing tenure for Guide Outfitting has been amended to include the new site. Guide outfitting associated with his Guide Outfitter Certificate is the only permitted activity.

Public Works Canada

The following work was done last year in the Alaska Highway Corridor:

- cleared and grubbed the right of way km 737 (Prochniak Creek to Liard bridge)
- crushed aggregates in Tetsa gravel pit (Mill Creek)
- routine mixing of sand/salt and cold mix at the highway camp
- routine maintenance of the highway surface and right of way.

Petroleum Lands Branch

Local strategic planning activities were conducted in association with the development of the Besa Prophet Pre-Tenure Plan for Oil and Gas.

Oil and Gas Commission

There were 22 inspections carried out by the Compliance and Enforcement Branch of the OGC on 6 well locations in the MK area. These inspections were carried out under the auspices of the Drilling and Production Regulation which includes an environmental component with respect to construction practices and ongoing maintenance of the access roads and leases.



MUSKWA KECHIKA

Advisory Board Annual Report 1998/99

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